

<i>NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE POLICY DIRECTIVE PD 30-125 EFFECTIVE DATE</i>	
<i>Administration and Operations</i>	
<i>FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT</i>	
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<i>SUMMARY OF REVISIONS:</i>	

Introduction. The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) is a federal statute that generally provides that any person has a right to obtain access to federal agency records, except to the extent that part or all of the records are protected from disclosure by any of nine exemptions contained in the law or by one of three special law enforcement record exclusions.

Objective. It is the policy of NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to comply with the FOIA in its entirety as established in Title 5, United States Code, Section 552, and with the Department of Commerce guidance as described in Title 15, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 4, 4a, and 4b. Specific guidance for complying with the Act is provided in procedural directive #30-123-01, "NMFS Freedom of Information Act Handbook."

Authorities and Responsibilities. This directive establishes the following authorities and responsibilities:

- All NMFS employees will comply with FOIA as outlined in the Act itself, and will act in accordance with the specific guidelines given in the NMFS Freedom of Information Act Handbook.

Measuring Effectiveness. All aspects of the FOIA request process will be tracked using a database. Compliance with the FOIA guidelines will be evaluated based on information from this database. NMFS will measure the effectiveness of this FOIA handbook by evaluating the number of days it takes to respond to a FOIA request and demonstrating a reduction of the number of appeals and/or lawsuits concerning timeliness.

References. This policy directive is supported by the references listed in Attachment 1.

_____/s/_____ William T. Hogarth, Ph.D. Assistant Administrator for Fisheries	_____ 8/02/05 Date
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Attachment 1

References

Freedom of Information Statute, Title 5, United States Code, Section 552.

Department of Commerce regulations, Title 15, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 4, 4a, and 4b.

Procedural Directive #30-125-01, “NMFS Freedom of Information Act Handbook” and
Chapter VI of the “NMFS Freedom of Information Act Handbook” .